DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 440 156 UD 033 375

AUTHOR	Bositis, David A.
TITLE	National Opinion Poll--Education, 1998.
INSTITUTION	Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	22p.; For the 1997 report on politics, see ED 418 187.
AVAILABLE FROM	Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 1090 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005-4961 ($6). Tel: 202-789-3500; Web site: http://www.jointcenter.org.
PUB TYPE	Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Achievement; Adults; *Blacks; Educational Finance; Educational Vouchers; *Elementary Secondary Education; *Public Opinion; Public Schools; *School Choice; Surveys; Whites
IDENTIFIERS	African Americans

ABSTRACT

A national survey of 1,606 adults was conducted in September 1998 covering a broad range of topics, including politics, education, social security, devolution, health care, the environment, and deregulation. The survey had 2 components: a sample of 850 adults from the national population, including 94 African Americans, and a separate sample of 850 African Americans. This report presents findings on education. Three areas of education received special focus in the survey: educational quality; school spending; and vouchers. The 1998 report shows some interesting changes from 1997. African Americans expressed greater satisfaction with their schools than they did in 1997, and their attitudes were more like those of the general population in 1998. There was a significant decline in support for school vouchers in both the black and general populations. A strong majority of respondents thought that too little is being spent on education, although this view was more strongly held among blacks (76.4%) than whites (59.7%). A note explains survey methodology. Contains 7 tables of polling data. (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 440 156

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
C. Ino
Joint Center for Political + Econ. studies
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2B

JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES

Public Opinion 1998: Education

David A. Bositis

October 1998

Findings from the Joint Center National Opinion Poll

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1090 VERMONT AVE., NW, SUITE 1100 • WASHINGTON, DC 20005-4961
202-789-3500 • 202-789-6390 FAX • WWW.JOINTCTR.ORG

UD033375

THE JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES
1998 NATIONAL OPINION POLL: EDUCATION

The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies 1998 National Opinion Poll, a national survey of 1,606 adults, was conducted between September 5 and September 27, 1998. The survey's questions cover a broad range of topics including politics, education, social security, devolution, health care, the environment, and deregulation.

The survey has two components: a sample of 850 adults from the national population (including 94 African Americans) and a sample of 850 adults from the national African American population. The first two releases of the findings from the survey cover opinions on politics and education. This release is on education. In the following months, the Joint Center will release findings on the other topics identified above. The survey methodology is described in an accompanying appendix.

SUMMARY

In the closing days of the 105TH Congress, education is one of the most prominent issues being debated. In many of this year's political campaigns, at every level—federal, state, and local—education is one of the major election issues. In the 1998 Joint Center National Opinion Poll report on politics, education ranked near the top of respondents' lists of the nation's most important problems.

Three areas of education policy have been dominant in defining much of 1998's debate: quality of schools, school spending, and vouchers. In the Joint Center's 1998 poll, these policy issues received special focus. The 1998 results show some interesting changes from 1997. In particular, African Americans expressed greater satisfaction with their schools than they did last year—and in

the process their attitudes much more resembled those of the general population than in the past. Further, compared with the Joint Center's 1997 survey, there has been a significant decline in support for school vouchers in both the black and general populations.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Rating Public Schools**

Whites remain more likely than blacks to voice satisfaction with their local public schools, but the gap between the races on this issue has narrowed greatly (from 26 percentage points to 12 points) since 1997. This year, 45.8 percent of African Americans rated their schools as excellent or good, compared with 57.4 percent of whites.

- **Are Schools Improving?**

Very little difference is evident between the races in their opinion on whether public schools have improved over the last five years. Among blacks and whites, roughly 26 to 29 percent felt schools have improved, while 26 to 28 percent felt they had grown worse. There were significant differences by income.

- **Should We Spend More on Schools?**

A strong majority of Americans of both races feel that too little is being spent on education, though this view is more strongly held among blacks (76.4 percent) than whites (59.7 percent).

- **Support for School Vouchers**

Since the Joint Center's last (1997) survey, support for school vouchers has declined by 16 percent among blacks, from 57.3 percent to 48.1 percent. A similar decline occurred among whites, where support dropped from 47 to 41.3 percent. Among blacks, support varies notably by age group and by region,

with baby boomers and those living in the Northeast and Midwest most supportive.

- **Voucher Policies**

A hypothetical voucher system described in the survey as means-tested (based on income) received majority support from African Americans (53.1 percent) and plurality support from whites (43.9 percent).

A more complex picture emerged when respondents were asked how much money vouchers should be worth to be effective: 33.6 percent of blacks and 46.4 percent of whites said they did not know. While the amounts cited varied widely among subgroups of both races, the most common response among blacks (19.7 percent) was $10,000 and, among whites (18.2 percent), $5,000.

When asked how much they could afford to contribute to supplement a voucher payment to send a child to a desirable school, even larger proportions of respondents answered that they didn't know or that it didn't concern them (nearly two-thirds of whites answered this way). Among people with children, the most commonly cited amount among both blacks and whites was a contribution of $2,000 - $5,000.

ANALYSIS

Rating Public Schools (Table 1)

While whites expressed more satisfaction with their local public schools than did blacks, the gap between the two populations narrowed significantly since the 1997 survey. This year a majority of whites (57.4 percent) rated their local public schools as excellent or good, while 45.8 percent of blacks did so. While this 11.6 percentage point gap is significant, in 1997 the racial gap was 26.4 points. This narrowing was due to a modest but real increase among blacks in their satisfaction with their schools, as the following table shows:

	Black Population			General Population		
	Excellent/Good %	Fair %	Poor %	Excellent/Good %	Fair %	Poor %
1996	41.0	37.0	16.5	63.7	22.7	7.4
1997	34.3	37.7	23.3	56.9	26.2	13.3
1998	45.8	30.4	16.8	54.4	25.3	16.1

Since the last survey, among blacks there has been a 33 percent increase in those rating their local public schools excellent or good, and a corresponding decline in those rating them poor (down from 23.3 percent to 16.8 percent).

There were several subgroup differences among blacks in rating their local public schools. Majorities of older (50+ years) blacks rated these schools as excellent or good, as did blacks in the Northeast (65.1 percent), liberals (52.9 percent), Christian conservatives (51.0 percent), and college graduates (54.3 percent). Younger blacks tended to rate their local public schools more critically, with the 26-35-year-old cohort most critical (only 38.0 percent excellent or good and 25 percent poor).

In the general population, majorities of most subgroups rated their schools excellent or good with no major exceptions.

School Progress (Table 2)

To further examine how people feel about their local schools, respondents were asked whether over the past five years schools were getting better or worse. Somewhat surprisingly, blacks and whites (in the aggregate) assessed changes over that time period quite similarly. In the black population, 28.5 percent believed schools were getting better, 27.6 percent believed they were getting worse, and 36.9 percent thought they were the same. Slightly fewer whites than blacks answered better (26.1 percent) or worse (25.7 percent), and the collective views of the two populations were largely in agreement.

Noticeable age differences appeared in the black population, with younger blacks (ages 18-25: 36.7 percent better/41.4 percent worse) being both more positive and negative than older blacks (age 65+: 22.0 percent better/3.6 percent worse). Lower-middle income (42.8 percent better) and upper-income blacks ($75,000+) clearly felt that the schools have improved. Low-income (40.9 percent worse) and middle-income (44.3 percent worse) African Americans were two groups that saw little school progress, as were westerners (41.9 percent worse) and political moderates (40.6 percent worse).

There were no interesting subgroup differences in the general population.

School Spending (Table 3)

The school spending debate in Washington and elsewhere is not surprising, since large majorities of all Americans think too little is being spent on education. Among African Americans surveyed, 76.4 percent indicated that they believe too little money is being spent on schools; 59.7 percent of whites indicated this view as did 62.4 percent of the general population. In the black population, all significant subgroups expressed this view, the main differences being matters of degree. Younger blacks (under 35) supported increased school spending more than black seniors (83 vs. 69.9 percent). Strong black support also was voiced by southerners (82.4 percent), moderates (85.7 percent), Christian

conservatives (83.5 percent), and low-income (86.8 percent) and middle-income people (87.9 percent).

In the general population, there was widespread support for more school spending except among seniors (only 44 percent think too little is being spent) and Christian conservatives (40.3 percent).

School Vouchers (Table 4)

Support for school vouchers in the Joint Center's 1998 survey shows a 16 percent decline from the 1997 results among African Americans. In the 1997 survey, a majority of blacks (57.3 percent) supported school vouchers; in the 1998 survey, only 48.1 percent did. There was a similar decline among whites, with the majority being opposed in 1998 (50.2 percent opposed vs. 41.3 percent in favor) from an even split (at 47 percent) in 1997.

The clear generational division on school vouchers which was seen in the Joint Center's 1997 survey was more muted in 1998, principally because the youngest blacks (ages 18-25) opposed vouchers this year, unlike in 1997. Solid majorities of baby boomers and those ages 26 to 35 supported vouchers; blacks over age 50 opposed them, although black seniors' substantial opposition (in 1997) was more muted.

Regional differences among African Americans in 1998 are as interesting as generational differences. African Americans in the Northeast (69 percent) and Midwest (64.6 percent) supported vouchers, while those in the South and West opposed them. Women (54.3 percent) and people with children (50 percent) supported vouchers more than men and people without children.

In the general population, younger people were more supportive of vouchers than those over age 50 and, surprisingly, liberals (50.7 percent) were more supportive than moderates or conservatives. As in the black population, people with children in the general population supported vouchers (50.6 percent).

Progressive School Vouchers (Table 5)

Most school voucher initiatives that have been put in place (e.g., in Milwaukee and Cleveland) have focused on vouchers for children from poor families. In order to assess the public's views on this, respondents were asked whether a hypothetical voucher system should provide the same money to all children or whether it should be based on income. Among African Americans a majority (53.1 percent) supported progressive, income-based voucher amounts (or means testing); pluralities of whites (43.9 percent) and of the general population (46.8 percent) also supported this position.

Among the black population, all major groups supported means testing except the youngest age group (54.0 percent of whom favored the same amount for all) and black midwesterners (a plurality of 45.7 percent favored the same amount). In the general population, the only major subgroup opposing means testing was secular conservatives (47 percent for the same amount vs. 41.7 percent for means testing).

School Voucher Amounts (Table 6)

Another major issue surrounding the school voucher debate is how much school vouchers should be worth if they are to have their intended effect of genuinely expanding educational opportunity. In the survey, respondents were given four choices for voucher dollar amounts— $2,000, $3,200, $5,000, or $10,000 or more—and asked how much was necessary to ensure a good education. A large proportion of blacks (33.6 percent) and an even larger proportion of whites (46.4 percent) stated that they didn't know how much money was necessary, which is indicative that this policy area still represents uncharted territory for many people. This uncertainty is similarly reflected in the fairly disordered (almost random) choices made by those who picked a specific amount.

Among African Americans, the modal (i.e., most often given) response was $10,000 (19.7 percent), closely followed by $5,000 (18.2 percent); $5,000 was the modal response for whites (18.2 percent). There was great variation in

responses across the subgroups of both populations. Among blacks, a majority of 18-25-year-olds opted for $2,000 or $3,200, while a majority of 26-35-year-olds thought $5,000 or $10,000 a better amount; a majority of blacks in the Northeast also opted for the more expensive choices, as did a plurality of liberals. In the general population, except for the two youngest age cohorts, who tended to favor higher rather than lower dollar amounts, there were no intelligible subgroup differences.

Supplementing Voucher Dollars (Table 7)

Finally, respondents were asked if they were to receive a voucher for an amount insufficient for a desired school, how much they could contribute themselves to have their child attend the desired school. Even more so than with the basic voucher amount discussed above, on this question there was great uncertainty. First, 57.6 percent of the black respondents and 67.1 percent of the white respondents indicated either that they didn't know or that it didn't concern them (e.g., they did not have children). Again, as noted in the previous question, the responses were somewhat disorderly.

Among African Americans, the modal response was that they could afford to contribute between $1,000 and $2,000 (17.8 percent); 7.6 percent of those responding said they could contribute nothing. Near majorities of blacks in the top three income categories indicated that they could contribute at least $1,000, while 25.3 percent of those without high school diplomas responded that they could contribute nothing.

The modal response for whites was between $2,000 and $5,000 (11.3 percent); 9.7 percent said they could contribute nothing. This ($2,000-$5,000) was also the modal response for both blacks and whites with children.

TABLE 1. How would you rate your local public schools—would you say they are excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	Black Population						General Population					
	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Poor %	D/K %	(N)	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Poor %	D/K %	(N)
Total	12.7	33.1	30.4	16.8	7.1	850	17.2	37.2	25.3	16.1	4.2	850
White	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.2	39.2	24.4	14.0	4.2	709
Men	8.0	33.6	33.9	17.4	7.1	400	15.5	39.1	27.4	14.8	3.2	412
Women	16.8	32.7	27.3	16.2	7.0	450	18.7	35.4	23.3	17.4	5.3	438
18-25 yrs.	12.5	34.4	33.0	14.8	5.3	127	20.2	33.7	28.1	18.0	-	89
26-35 yrs.	12.0	26.0	27.3	25.0	9.8	168	22.9	21.7	35.5	18.7	1.2	166
36-50 yrs.	15.4	28.1	30.4	18.3	7.8	257	15.9	42.2	20.9	17.3	3.7	301
51-64 yrs.	12.2	41.8	28.0	18.0	-	175	12.7	45.2	25.3	12.7	4.2	166
65+ yrs.	9.3	45.6	27.8	1.3	16.0	88	16.4	38.8	17.2	13.8	13.8	116
Northeast	8.7	58.4	7.2	15.1	10.6	153	18.0	30.2	34.9	9.9	7.0	172
Midwest	26.9	22.8	23.5	24.0	2.9	156	21.0	36.1	24.9	13.7	4.4	205
South	8.5	33.1	35.6	15.3	7.4	452	18.6	39.9	20.6	17.6	3.4	296
West	15.4	7.7	56.0	14.4	6.5	88	9.6	40.7	24.3	22.6	2.8	177
Liberal	15.9	37.0	19.6	16.7	10.7	333	18.8	42.4	24.0	10.5	4.4	229
Moderate	10.4	26.1	38.4	21.0	4.1	354	18.4	35.3	28.6	16.1	1.6	255
Secular Conservative	-	38.6	53.7	7.6	-	24	22.0	29.5	27.3	19.7	1.5	132
Christian Conservative	8.6	42.4	38.7	3.1	7.1	115	13.8	41.8	20.4	19.4	4.6	196
Less than HS	2.4	43.1	31.2	15.9	7.5	97	15.7	33.3	27.5	15.7	7.8	51
HS Graduate	13.5	29.4	32.7	18.5	5.9	277	10.5	41.2	24.1	19.3	4.8	228
Some College/Tech	11.8	31.2	20.3	26.3	10.5	184	19.2	38.1	24.7	14.6	3.3	239
College Degree+	15.2	39.1	32.5	6.7	6.7	259	20.3	33.3	27.0	15.9	3.5	315
Less than $15,000	17.2	32.5	22.8	25.2	2.4	75	31.1	13.3	26.7	24.4	4.4	45
$15-$35,000	-	62.2	29.0	3.2	5.6	129	12.1	45.9	30.6	7.6	3.8	157
$35-$60,000	14.1	34.8	33.5	13.7	3.8	211	16.3	38.9	28.0	12.5	4.3	257
$60-$75,000	-	-	31.0	45.6	23.4	39	8.5	38.0	35.2	15.5	2.8	71
$75-$90,000	35.5	24.8	19.6	22.0	-	41	21.8	41.8	18.2	14.5	3.6	55
More than $90,000	16.0	35.6	42.2	6.3	-	63	28.4	34.9	11.0	25.7	-	109
Children	13.1	33.2	30.8	20.4	2.5	326	17.0	46.5	16.4	19.5	0.6	318
No Children	11.0	34.3	29.6	14.0	11.0	460	17.0	30.4	29.8	15.5	7.2	470

Notes "College Degree +" includes persons with four-year degrees as well as those with advanced degrees. Income categories represent household income.

TABLE 2. Over the past five years, do you think that the schools in your community have gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?

	Black Population					General Population				
	Better %	Same %	Worse %	D/K %	(N)	Better %	Same %	Worse %	D/K %	(N)
Total	28.5	36.9	27.6	7.1	850	28.5	38.0	25.9	7.6	850
White	-	-	-	-	-	26.1	39.5	25.7	8.7	709
Men	33.0	29.9	32.2	4.8	400	35.0	37.6	25.0	2.4	412
Women	24.4	43.1	23.4	9.0	450	22.4	38.4	26.7	12.6	438
18-25 yrs.	36.7	20.5	41.4	1.4	127	34.8	32.6	31.5	1.1	89
26-35 yrs.	32.4	32.1	24.0	11.6	168	24.1	33.7	30.1	12.0	166
36-50 yrs.	29.2	34.8	26.6	9.4	257	30.6	41.5	21.3	6.6	301
51-64 yrs.	23.1	43.7	29.6	3.6	175	21.7	43.4	30.7	4.2	166
65+ yrs.	22.0	65.1	3.6	9.3	88	34.5	34.5	19.0	12.1	116
Northeast	20.5	53.4	18.4	7.7	153	26.7	47.1	20.3	5.8	172
Midwest	24.6	40.4	26.9	8.1	156	26.8	41.0	25.9	6.3	205
South	32.6	32.2	28.1	7.1	452	30.4	36.5	27.4	5.7	296
West	28.0	26.0	41.9	4.1	88	28.8	28.8	28.8	14.1	177
Liberal	33.3	46.0	14.9	5.8	333	31.0	39.3	22.3	7.4	229
Moderate	25.4	31.8	40.6	2.3	354	29.4	37.6	25.1	7.8	255
Secular Conservative	27.0	34.4	38.6	-	24	34.1	41.7	22.7	1.5	132
Christian Conservative	23.6	28.7	26.5	21.2	115	23.0	34.7	29.1	13.3	196
Less than HS	16.5	48.9	26.2	8.4	97	41.2	27.5	23.5	7.8	51
HS Graduate	33.5	36.5	27.1	2.9	277	25.0	35.1	28.5	11.8	228
Some College/Tech	26.7	48.0	20.9	4.4	184	37.7	40.2	18.0	4.2	239
College Degree+	29.9	26.6	29.8	13.8	259	22.9	41.6	28.8	7.3	315
Less than $15,000	26.8	32.3	40.9	-	75	37.8	20.0	33.3	8.9	45
$15-$35,000	42.8	43.3	1.4	12.6	129	25.5	45.2	19.7	9.6	157
$35-$60,000	15.2	31.7	44.3	8.7	211	24.1	43.6	25.7	6.6	257
$60-$75,000	31.0	54.4	14.6	-	39	26.8	36.6	28.2	8.5	71
$75-$90,000	53.2	-	46.8	-	41	38.2	47.3	10.9	3.6	55
More than $90,000	43.7	29.8	14.0	12.5	63	34.9	33.9	26.6	4.6	109
Children	36.5	25.5	35.5	2.5	326	29.9	40.6	23.0	6.6	318
No Children	21.9	46.3	20.8	11.0	460	27.7	37.7	27.0	7.7	470

TABLE 3. Do you think that the government is spending too much, too little, or just the right amount of money on education?

	Black Population					General Population				
	Too Much %	Just Right %	Too Little %	D/K %	(N)	Too Much %	Just Right %	Too Little %	D/K %	(N)
Total	5.8	10.9	76.4	6.8	850	11.1	20.5	62.4	6.1	850
White	-	-	-	-	-	12.4	21.3	59.7	6.6	709
Men	5.4	10.5	79.2	4.8	400	15.5	22.8	58.0	3.6	412
Women	6.2	11.2	73.9	8.6	450	6.8	18.3	66.4	8.4	438
18-25 yrs.	9.6	-	82.9	7.5	127	4.5	13.5	80.9	1.1	89
26-35 yrs.	3.4	7.8	83.5	5.4	168	11.4	13.9	66.9	7.8	166
36-50 yrs.	7.5	21.3	68.4	2.8	257	10.0	19.9	67.1	3.0	301
51-64 yrs.	4.6	8.8	78.8	7.7	175	16.9	21.7	53.6	7.8	166
65+ yrs.	-	10.6	69.9	19.5	88	8.6	35.3	44.0	12.1	116
Northeast	6.9	11.5	72.2	9.4	153	2.9	23.3	66.9	7.0	172
Midwest	14.4	16.6	68.5	0.6	156	13.7	19.5	62.9	3.9	205
South	3.1	7.6	82.4	7.0	452	15.5	20.6	62.2	1.7	296
West	3.1	16.8	67.3	12.8	88	8.5	18.6	57.6	15.3	177
Liberal	10.0	10.7	66.6	12.6	333	6.1	12.2	75.1	6.6	229
Moderate	2.3	9.7	85.7	2.3	354	5.1	23.1	69.8	2.0	255
Secular Conservative	34.4	19.3	46.3	-	24	26.5	16.7	50.8	6.1	132
Christian Conservative	-	9.4	83.5	7.1	115	16.3	31.1	40.3	12.2	196
Less than HS	2.4	12.2	74.8	10.6	97	11.8	33.3	47.1	7.8	51
HS Graduate	6.6	4.7	79.5	9.2	277	7.5	21.9	59.6	11.0	228
Some College/Tech	4.4	14.4	77.3	3.9	184	13.4	20.9	64.9	0.8	239
College Degree+	8.1	16.0	70.1	5.9	259	12.4	18.1	65.7	3.8	315
Less than $15,000	-	13.2	86.8	-	75	20.0	22.2	48.9	8.9	45
$15-$35,000	13.3	11.6	63.2	11.9	129	8.3	14.6	73.9	3.2	157
$35-$60,000	1.7	10.4	87.9	-	211	13.2	24.9	56.4	5.4	257
$60-$75,000	-	-	76.6	23.4	39	9.9	21.1	66.2	2.8	71
$75-$90,000	-	24.8	75.2	-	41	7.3	7.3	78.2	7.3	55
More than $90,000	16.0	-	84.0	-	63	11.9	22.0	64.2	1.8	109
Children	7.1	5.8	80.2	6.9	326	9.4	19.2	66.7	4.7	318
No Children	5.2	15.7	71.6	7.6	460	11.9	21.5	60.0	6.6	470

TABLE 4. Would you support a voucher system where parents would get money from the government to send their children to the public, private, or parochial school of their choice?

	Black Population				General Population			
	Yes %	No %	D/K %	(N)	Yes %	No %	D/K %	(N)
Total	48.1	39.8	12.1	850	42.0	50.2	7.8	850
White	-	-	-	-	41.3	50.2	8.5	709
Men	41.0	47.0	12.0	400	39.1	54.1	6.8	412
Women	54.3	33.5	12.2	450	44.7	46.6	8.7	438
18-25 yrs.	37.3	51.5	11.2	127	46.1	46.1	7.9	89
26-35 yrs.	64.6	29.3	6.0	168	45.8	39.8	14.5	166
36-50 yrs.	55.2	34.6	10.2	257	48.2	49.8	2.0	301
51-64 yrs.	33.7	43.3	23.0	175	33.1	60.2	6.6	166
65+ yrs.	38.4	49.9	11.7	88	31.9	56.9	11.2	116
Northeast	69.0	17.6	13.4	153	42.4	48.3	9.3	172
Midwest	60.3	32.6	7.1	156	47.8	48.8	3.4	205
South	38.3	47.4	14.3	452	38.9	57.4	3.7	296
West	39.9	52.7	7.4	88	40.1	41.8	18.1	177
Liberal	46.2	35.3	18.4	333	50.7	40.6	8.7	229
Moderate	50.9	44.5	4.6	354	32.9	55.7	11.4	255
Secular Conservative	7.6	92.4	-	24	44.7	53.0	2.3	132
Christian Conservative	49.4	28.6	22.1	115	47.4	47.4	5.1	196
Less than HS	42.5	30.0	27.5	97	47.1	37.3	15.7	51
HS Graduate	52.1	35.4	12.5	277	31.6	55.3	13.2	228
Some College/Tech	58.7	41.3	-	184	45.2	46.4	8.4	239
College Degree+	38.6	45.3	16.1	259	45.7	51.7	2.5	315
Less than $15,000	28.0	51.6	20.4	75	48.9	42.2	8.9	45
$15-$35,000	47.4	32.2	20.4	129	30.6	59.9	9.6	157
$35-$60,000	52.4	39.9	7.7	211	38.9	54.9	6.2	257
$60-$75,000	26.3	73.7	-	39	42.3	52.1	5.6	71
$75-$90,000	50.4	49.6	-	41	61.8	38.2	-	55
More than $90,000	65.0	35.0	-	63	56.0	42.2	1.8	109
Children	50.0	36.9	13.1	326	50.6	42.1	7.2	318
No Children	46.8	40.5	12.8	460	37.4	55.3	7.2	470

TABLE 5. If a voucher system were implemented, do you think that the government should provide the same amount of money for all children, or do you think that the voucher amount should be based on family income with poorer children receiving more money?

	Black Population				General Population			
	Same Amount %	Means Test %	D/K %	(N)	Same Amount %	Means Test %	D/K %	(N)
Total	33.7	53.1	13.2	850	36.9	46.8	16.2	850
White	-	-	-	-	39.1	43.9	17.1	709
Men	31.1	55.3	13.7	400	37.4	47.3	15.3	412
Women	36.1	51.1	12.8	450	36.5	46.3	17.1	438
18-25 yrs.	54.0	39.6	6.4	127	30.3	66.3	3.4	89
26-35 yrs.	33.9	59.5	6.6	168	41.0	49.4	9.6	166
36-50 yrs.	27.4	55.1	17.5	257	39.2	45.8	15.0	301
51-64 yrs.	32.1	51.9	16.0	175	38.0	39.2	22.9	166
65+ yrs.	14.0	64.7	21.2	88	29.3	43.1	27.6	116
Northeast	29.9	61.9	8.2	153	37.8	47.1	15.1	172
Midwest	45.7	36.3	18.0	156	39.5	47.3	13.2	205
South	32.6	52.7	14.7	452	35.1	48.3	16.6	296
West	25.0	69.4	5.7	88	35.2	43.5	20.3	177
Liberal	15.1	65.3	19.6	333	27.9	58.5	13.5	229
Moderate	47.0	47.1	5.9	354	36.1	42.0	22.0	255
Secular Conservative	73.0	27.0	-	24	47.0	41.7	11.4	132
Christian Conservative	46.1	39.8	14.1	115	40.3	46.4	13.3	196
Less than HS	9.8	79.6	10.6	97	19.6	72.5	7.8	51
HS Graduate	37.0	43.5	19.5	277	34.6	46.9	18.4	228
Some College/Tech	25.9	68.2	5.9	184	36.4	49.8	13.8	239
College Degree+	39.2	46.4	14.4	259	43.2	39.7	17.1	315
Less than $15,000	28.0	60.0	12.0	75	26.7	48.9	24.4	45
$15-$35,000	21.4	72.3	6.3	129	28.7	57.3	14.0	157
$35-$60,000	43.7	42.4	13.8	211	41.2	41.2	17.5	257
$60-$75,000	31.0	64.4	4.6	39	32.4	62.0	5.6	71
$75-$90,000	55.6	44.4	-	41	56.4	32.7	10.9	55
More than $90,000	31.7	68.3	-	63	49.5	39.4	11.0	109
Children	34.0	52.2	13.8	326	39.0	47.8	13.2	318
No Children	30.7	55.0	14.4	460	34.7	47.4	17.9	470

TABLE 6. How much money do you think school vouchers should provide in order to ensure that children get a good education—$2,000 per year, $3,200, $5,000, or $10,000 or more?

	Black Population						General Population					
	$2,000 %	$3,200 %	$5,000 %	$10,000 %	D/K %	(N)	$2,000 %	$3,200 %	$5,000 %	$10,000 %	D/K %	(N)
Total	13.4	15.0	18.2	19.7	33.6	850	12.9	15.1	19.3	7.4	45.3	850
White	-	-	-	-	-	-	13.3	15.1	18.2	7.1	46.4	709
Men	9.4	15.7	19.4	13.4	42.2	400	12.6	15.0	16.7	9.2	46.4	412
Women	17.0	14.4	17.2	25.3	26.1	450	13.2	15.1	21.7	5.7	44.3	438
18-25 yrs.	21.6	33.2	3.7	20.2	21.2	127	4.5	24.7	28.1	13.5	29.2	89
26-35 yrs.	8.2	16.1	27.6	24.4	23.8	168	15.1	14.5	19.9	14.5	36.1	166
36-50 yrs.	17.2	6.6	25.6	17.1	33.5	257	13.6	17.9	23.6	5.3	39.5	301
51-64 yrs.	2.0	15.9	12.5	19.5	50.1	175	9.6	12.0	8.4	4.8	65.1	166
65+ yrs.	9.1	9.3	16.5	19.5	45.6	88	14.7	6.9	18.1	1.7	58.6	116
Northeast	22.7	0.6	24.0	30.7	22.0	153	12.2	15.1	13.4	9.9	49.4	172
Midwest	14.6	12.3	17.6	23.4	32.1	156	11.2	22.4	23.9	7.8	34.6	205
South	10.7	19.1	18.5	15.3	36.5	452	15.2	12.5	18.2	8.1	45.9	296
West	9.5	24.0	8.2	16.4	41.9	88	11.9	10.7	21.5	3.4	52.5	177
Liberal	8.6	11.0	15.1	26.4	38.9	333	13.1	12.7	26.2	2.6	45.4	229
Moderate	20.1	12.9	20.7	19.6	26.6	354	9.4	12.2	18.8	4.7	54.9	255
Secular Conservative	38.6	53.7	-	7.6	-	24	10.6	30.3	9.1	10.6	39.4	132
Christian Conservative	4.7	28.5	27.4	7.1	32.3	115	21.4	14.3	19.9	9.2	35.2	196
Less than HS	9.8	4.7	16.9	25.2	43.4	97	11.8	19.6	25.5	7.8	35.3	51
HS Graduate	10.6	23.0	17.5	12.8	36.0	277	9.2	18.9	14.0	4.4	53.5	228
Some College/Tech	17.2	17.8	21.8	19.3	23.9	184	18.0	13.4	20.5	8.4	39.7	239
College Degree+	12.9	7.1	16.6	24.6	38.7	259	12.7	13.7	22.2	7.9	43.5	315
Less than $15,000	3.6	-	27.7	13.2	55.5	75	22.2	8.9	28.9	4.4	35.6	45
$15-$35,000	13.6	9.8	22.1	19.6	34.8	129	11.5	18.5	12.7	8.3	49.0	157
$35-$60,000	17.6	25.5	14.5	21.4	21.0	211	12.1	8.6	25.3	7.8	46.3	257
$60-$75,000	23.4	-	4.6	52.7	19.3	39	18.3	16.9	11.3	14.1	39.4	71
$75-$90,000	19.6	-	-	22.0	58.3	41	3.6	21.8	30.9	-	43.6	55
More than $90,000	3.5	15.7	25.5	23.5	31.7	63	12.8	24.8	25.7	7.3	29.4	109
Children	16.1	13.6	20.7	20.9	28.7	326	14.5	17.9	25.2	9.1	33.3	318
No Children	8.9	16.0	15.6	19.4	40.1	460	10.2	13.8	17.4	6.0	52.6	470

TABLE 7. If you received a school voucher for your child, and it was not enough to send your child to the school you wanted, how much money could you personally add to the value of the voucher in order to send your child to a school of your choice?

	Black Population							General Population						
	$0 %	$0-$1k %	$1k-$2k %	$2k-$5k %	$5k+ %	D/K %	(N)	$0 %	$0-$1k %	$1k-$2k %	$2k-$5k %	$5k+ %	D/K %	(N)
Total	7.6	5.5	17.8	9.2	2.3	57.6	850	9.5	2.1	6.7	10.7	4.0	66.9	850
White	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.7	2.5	5.8	11.3	3.5	67.1	709
Men	4.8	-	25.1	8.3	2.6	59.3	400	8.0	1.9	8.0	10.0	4.9	67.2	412
Women	10.0	10.4	11.4	10.0	2.0	56.1	450	11.0	2.3	5.5	11.4	3.2	66.7	438
18-25 yrs.	1.8	6.4	22.8	15.7	5.4	47.9	127	10.1	-	6.7	6.7	6.7	69.7	89
26-35 yrs.	8.3	18.3	18.4	-	1.1	54.0	168	9.6	1.8	8.4	10.2	7.8	62.0	166
36-50 yrs.	9.8	3.2	18.4	11.2	-	57.4	257	9.6	3.0	11.3	15.9	5.0	55.1	301
51-64 yrs.	13.2	-	12.8	8.7	-	65.4	175	6.0	1.8	1.2	5.4	-	85.5	166
65+ yrs.	-	-	7.8	8.2	9.5	74.4	88	14.7	2.6	-	9.5	-	73.3	116
Northeast	11.2	15.3	15.5	17.0	1.8	39.2	153	12.2	3.5	6.4	12.8	2.3	62.8	172
Midwest	11.0	4.6	23.1	4.2	2.9	54.3	156	8.8	1.0	3.9	10.2	2.4	73.7	205
South	6.0	3.6	17.7	7.9	1.9	62.8	452	10.1	1.7	10.1	10.5	5.7	61.5	296
West	3.3	-	13.1	11.0	3.9	68.6	88	6.8	2.8	4.5	9.6	4.5	70.1	177
Liberal	9.6	4.9	23.1	1.0	2.7	58.7	333	11.8	2.6	9.2	12.2	5.7	58.5	229
Moderate	2.0	8.7	13.2	14.5	2.9	58.7	354	11.8	3.1	4.7	5.5	3.9	71.0	255
Secular Conservative	-	-	53.7	38.6	-	7.6	24	6.1	1.5	7.6	15.9	3.8	65.2	132
Christian Conservative	22.1	-	13.3	6.3	-	58.3	115	5.1	1.0	6.1	12.2	3.1	72.4	196
Less than HS	25.3	-	14.1	15.9	-	44.7	97	-	3.9	11.8	3.9	15.7	64.7	51
HS Graduate	-	5.5	20.9	4.5	0.7	68.4	277	9.2	3.5	5.7	7.5	0.9	72.4	228
Some College/Tech	9.8	3.9	7.9	7.8	3.9	66.7	184	6.7	0.8	10.9	9.6	2.9	69.0	239
College Degree+	5.4	9.4	22.6	13.9	-	48.8	259	12.7	1.9	3.8	15.6	5.4	59.4	315
Less than $15,000	-	-	12.1	20.4	-	67.5	75	4.4	8.9	4.4	-	-	82.2	45
$15-$35,000	19.6	6.3	34.4	-	-	39.7	129	14.0	1.3	10.2	8.9	5.1	60.5	157
$35-$60,000	10.0	14.5	7.0	13.2	3.4	51.9	211	9.3	1.6	6.2	12.8	1.9	68.1	257
$60-$75,000	-	-	54.4	-	-	45.6	39	5.6	5.6	8.5	14.1	5.6	60.6	71
$75-$90,000	-	-	22.0	19.6	-	58.3	41	3.6	-	7.3	18.2	3.6	63.6	55
More than $90,000	-	-	12.5	30.3	2.8	54.4	63	10.1	-	4.6	16.5	11.9	53.2	109
Children	4.2	14.4	13.8	16.3	0.6	50.8	326	9.7	1.9	9.7	14.8	8.5	55.4	318
No Children	9.1	-	21.1	5.3	1.5	62.9	460	10.2	2.6	5.1	9.4	1.5	71.3	470

APPENDIX

Methodology

The survey was designed and the questionnaire developed at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. The overall study design consisted of two groups: a national general population sample of 850 and a national sample of African Americans of 850. There were 94 African American respondents in the general population sample who were also part of the national sample of African Americans. Thus, in total, 1,606 adults, 18 years of age or older, were included in this study.

The survey results are based upon (random digit dialing) telephone interviews with these 1,606 adults, conducted between September 5, 1998, and September 27, 1998. The field work was done by Research America of Philadelphia. Randomized procedures were used to select respondents within each household reached by telephone, and after the initial call, there were at least three 'call-backs' if no interview was completed.

The results of this survey for both the general population sample and the black population sample should be interpreted with a statistical margin of error of ± 3.5 percentage points. That is, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the statements made based upon the procedures employed have a random error (sampling error, random measurement error, etc.) component of ± 3.5 percentage points. Actually, this survey, like all surveys, does not have a margin of error. The individual *items* in the survey have margins of error; the margin of error for a question is based upon its sample variance, the level of confidence desired (*e.g.*, 95 percent), and upon sample size.[1] The ± 3.5 percentage points is a conservative estimate of margin of error; *i.e.*, many items—especially those where large majorities of either sample hold similar

---

[1] A random sample is a random subset of a population. One makes observations on suitable units of a random sample in order to make statements about the population and to estimate the error associated with such statements. A common misconception regarding surveys and associated statistical theory is that 'population' (or population size) is a factor in margin of error. This is not true. Population does not appear in the statistical formulation for margin of error.

positions—have a margin of error much smaller than ±3.5 percentage points.

In addition to the random error component in surveys, there are potentially non-random errors that may be present. While this survey is based upon random digit dialing techniques that effectively deal with potential problems in telephone surveys such as unlisted numbers and new numbers, non-response in telephone surveys produces a variety of known (and probably some unknown) biases. Further, a telephone survey by definition limits its population to those individuals who may reasonably be expected to be reached by telephone. Such a definition, of course, eliminates certain populations; for example, most homeless people and others living in poverty who are unreachable by phone are not part of the sample population. Thus, the statements made based upon this survey are most likely not generalizable to homeless people, black or white.

During the field work phase of the survey, an effort was made to maximize the use of same-race interviewers, and a majority of the interviews were conducted with same-race interviewers (*i.e.*, black interviewers for black respondents and white interviewers for white respondents).

The sample data from the overall survey are weighted in the analyses to population parameters for a variety of demographic factors. The parameters used in this weighting are from the U.S. Bureau of the Census *1996 Current Population Survey*, and prior Joint Center surveys.